

### Remarks

Claim 17 has been amended to correct a clerical error. Claims 25, 27, 29, 31, 33, and 35 have been deleted as suggested by the examiner, on the basis that they are duplicate to earlier claims. Claims 12 and 24 have been currently amended to stipulate that the ionizer is not only battery-operated but also portable. Further, in both of these claims, it is stipulated that the ion-emitter is exposed, when in use, for release of ions into the surrounding environment.

Concurrently, the applicant is filing a further Information Disclosure Statement listing three further US patents, all originating from the same inventor as in the present application:

5,518,531 Ion injector for air handling systems  
5,538,692 Ionizing type air cleaner, and  
6,077,334 Externally ionizing air filter

In the case of US 5,518,531 Ion injector for air handling systems, an ion injector probe is provided with an electrical connection by which it may be attached to a duct 7. The duct then serves as a counter-electrode to induce release of ions. However, ions are not released into the open air but into the airflow within the duct.

In the case of US 5,538,692 Ionizing type air cleaner, an external band of resistive electrodes serve as counter-electrodes to induce release of ions. These external electrodes are not connection means for connecting to an external counter-electrode.

In the case of US 6,077,334 Externally ionizing air filter, an ionizing needle is mounted on the upstream face of an air filter assembly and directed towards the arriving airflow, typically confined by a duct. As depicted in Figure 7 and 10, a counter-electrode is provided within the base supporting the ion source. Ions are not released into the open air.

In all three of these references, no teaching is provided that such ion emitters should be portable. Nor are these units shown as being intended to be battery-operated.

In the second reference a full, external, counter-electrode 14 is provided. These external electrodes are not connection means for connecting to an external counter-electrode.

Thus no one of these references meets the criteria of claims 12 and 24. Further, none of these references teach the underlying premise of claims 12 and 24, namely that a portable, battery-operated ionizer having an exposed ion-emitter may be provided with a conductive connection means by which an external body may be coupled to the ionizer in order to serve as a counter-electrode to induce emission of ions by the ion-emitter.

The examiner's initiative in proposing an examiner's amendment in this matter is appreciated. The applicant has used the opportunity to further characterize the claims of this patent in a way that will ensure their patentability.

Accordingly, reconsideration and a favorable ruling by the examiner is requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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